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MADRAS WAR REVIEW

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GOVERNOR OF MADRAS

GOVERNMENT HOUSE

11th May 1943.

It is exceedingly auspicious that the first anniversary of the National War Front should coincide with the great victory of the United Nations in Tunisia.

The Front has already proved its worth during its first year of existence, and I have not the slightest doubt, that like the Allied Forces, it will go from strength to strength until final victory is won.

Arthur Hope.
Governor of Madras.

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THE PLEDGE OF THE NATIONAL WAR FRONT

Because I am proud to be a citizen of India I solemnly pledge myself to stamp out defeatism and suppress alarmist rumours; to face and defy every peril threatening India's national honour and security, and to work day by day in sure and certain hope of victory.

Brothers who supplied a number of models free of charge, the District Organizer set up Victory House which was kindly opened by Captain G. T. B. Harvey, the Provincial Organizer, National War Front, and Director of War Publicity, on the 29th July 1942 in the presence of a huge gathering including war committee members of the district and divisions. It may be noted that this is the third of its kind, the first one being in Madras and the second at Madura. Several thousands of people visited Victory House and gathered useful information about war and the forces. Distinguished visitors like Mr. F. W. Stewart, C.I.E., M.C., I.C.S., First Member of the Board of Revenue, Sir T. G. Rutherford, the then Adviser to His Excellency the Governor of Madras, Mr. J. B. Brown, C.I.E., I.C.S., Second Member of the Board of Revenue, and Mr. H. K. Mathews, I.C.S., Personal Assistant to the Provincial Organizer, visited Victory House, and expressed great approbation of the equipment and get up of Victory House. In view of the introduction of the Security Permit system in the premises of the Collectorate, it was found necessary to shift Victory House to a more central part of the town which was freely accessible to the public. Accordingly Victory House was shifted to the Alexander Hall and formally re-opened on 3rd April 1943. It is gratifying to note that, in its new place, Victory House is attracting large crowds of people.

WAR INFORMATION BUREAUX

Side by side with the revival and formation of Reading Circles was undertaken the scheme of providing War Information Bureaux, at important centres in the district. Places chosen were mostly firka headquarters. Just as the Reading Circle serves mainly to educate the illiterate, the War Information Bureaux are intended to assist the literate in acquiring knowledge of war efforts. In all 22 War Information Bureaux were opened in various important places in the district. These are miniature. Victory Houses exhibiting war posters and photogravures issued from time to time. Besides, other important pictorial war propaganda material is supplied to these War Information Bureaux. These are proving to be centres of attraction to the villagers who have some leisure time to spend, which they do by studying the pictures, photos and war material kept for the purpose in these Bureaux.

POSTER DISPLAY

Shortly after the National War Front was inaugurated, a special drive was carried on to ensure satisfactory poster display in the various centres of this district.

(*a*) The list of poster sites maintained in the Collector's office was revised and the Tahsildars were specially instructed to secure poster display invariably at these sites. Forty-eight hours' duration is observed as a reasonable lapse between the despatch of posters from the District Organizer's office and the exhibition at the poster sites. Special poster registers were ordered to be maintained by Tahsildars containing particulars of the receipt and despatch of posters in their offices. Periodical inspection of Taluk offices were carried on by the District Organizer to make sure of the prompt despatch of the posters, as well as the other propaganda material, and it is satisfactory to note that all delays in the Taluk offices are in consequence avoided.

(*b*) Special poster boards were got fixed on running buses in the district at the instance of the District Organizer, with the kind co-operation of the bus-owners and the Secretary, Road Traffic Board, to whom the periodical supply of posters is made for purposes of exhibition on the boards. This has, to a considerable extent, augmented the propaganda utility of the posters.

(*c*) A special scheme was set afoot by the District Organizer, which consists in the erection of permanent poster boards in prominent and populous centres in important villages where there are Panchayat Boards. Several Panchayat Boards have kindly agreed to erect these boards at their own cost and to exhibit posters. The number of poster boards to be erected in each village range between 1 to 12 depending on the size of the village. Similar scheme was also agreed to be undertaken by the E. Municipality at the headquarters.

(*d*) Another scheme was proposed by the District Organizer to have permanent poster boards set up in front of all District Board institutions containing the ten edicts—how the public can help the war effort. The matter is pending consideration of the District Board and it is hoped that it will materialize.

(*e*) *Popularizing Defence Loans.*—Stencil display of the slogan "Buy Defence Loans and Make India Strong" was undertaken by the P. Municipality and a scheme was also put forward by the District Organizer for similar painted slogans being exhibited on the trunks of big trees along the side of the roads.

GROW MORE FOOD CAMPAIGN

This was undertaken in four different ways—

(*a*) Exhorting the public to exert more and grow more food in their lands.

(*b*) Inducing the people to utilize every inch of their available vacant sites or land for growing food-crops.

(*c*) Converting waste land to cultivation.

(*d*) Inducing people to give up commercial crops and take to food-crops.

When the National War Front came into existence, the District Organizer noticed that about 14,000 acres of dry land in K. and T. taluks were being cultivated yearly with

tobacco. A special campaign was carried on by the District Organizer assisted by the Honorary Divisional Organizer, K., to increase the quantity under food-crop cultivation and induce the public to give up the commercial crop of tobacco. As a result, several thousands of acres have been converted to food-crops purposes, the villagers willingly giving up growing tobacco in these lands. The grand success of the "Grow More Food Week" in this district is not a little due to the efforts of the National War Front.

In this connexion, it has to be pointed out that more effective and useful work would be turned out in furtherance of the "Grow More Food" Government Order, if the National War Front Department is entrusted with the power of allotting waste land for cultivation. It would be satisfactory on all hands to relieve the Revenue Department of this task.

PROPAGANDA: PUBLIC MEETINGS AND TALKS

In the period under review, nearly 7,000 meetings are held by the National War Front staff in this district, and every one of the villages in the district has been visited by one or other of the members of the National War Front staff. Some of these were mass meetings ranging from 2,000 to 10,000. It has been the uniform experience of the National War Front of this district that the meetings were largely attended and popular.

PROPAGANDA BY LANTERN SLIDES AND CINEMA REELS

Besides the slides supplied from Madras, a special set of slides were got prepared locally from the good photographs appearing in the *Neptune* Magazines. A special selection of the slides is supplied to each cinema in the district for exhibition during intervals. It has been found that all the cinemas are regularly projecting the slides supplied to them.

Cinema reels are being shown in accordance with the programme received from the Film Advisory Board and are being well received by the public.

The Rev. Coleman and Miss S. R. Simon of the Children's Aid Society have been regularly showing the slides supplied by the District Organizer with very satisfactory results.

VAN AND SHOW BOAT

During the first eight months, except in the very beginning, there was no propaganda van for this district. But it is gratifying to note that a van has at last been supplied exclusively for this district. The van itinerary is so drawn up that, in the space of two months, practically all important places are visited by the van. The van shows are generally attended by gatherings ranging between 1,000 and 10,000. On an approximate computation, it would be seen that the van shows were witnessed by about one lakh of people during these two months.

A new show boat scheme was put forward by the District Organizer which consisted of a staff boat, equipped with the same equipment as the propaganda van, but in addition carrying all the posters and some important war models. The show boat proposed is therefore a moving Victory House and cinema and it answers the needs of the villages on canal side, which are mostly inaccessible by road. It is hoped that the Director of War Publicity would push through the scheme on the re-opening of the canals after summer.

CONSTITUTIONAL IMPROVEMENTS

As the importance of propaganda was realised and the necessity for increasing its intensity became more acute, it was found that it would be more advantageous to have one Honorary Divisional Organizer for each taluk instead of for a division. Accordingly, Honorary Divisional Organizers for each taluk were appointed retaining the previous Honorary Divisional Organizers, but confining their jurisdiction to one taluk; so much so, there are now eight Honorary Divisional Organizers for the eight taluks.

By experience, it was realized, that as the Christian population was considerable in B. and N. taluks a special staff was necessary to carry on propaganda among them. Hence the District Organizer proposed the appointment of two separate propagandists for the taluks of B. and N. and a Christian Honorary Divisional Organizer to supervise their work and carry on propaganda for both these taluks. The Government were pleased to sanction the posts and two Christians were appointed as propagandists. The Rev. W. D. Coleman, U. L. C. Missionary for B. and N. taluks was induced by the District Organizer to accept the Christian Divisional Organizer's appointment.

The need for propaganda among women was realized as far back as July 1942, and the District Organizer submitted proposals for the appointment of lady propagandists. It is a matter for great satisfaction that the Provincial Organizer was pleased to give his full support to the scheme with the result that we have now two lady lecturers who have been carrying on vigorous propaganda among the women folk in the villages.

PROPAGANDA BY BALLADS AND WAR SONGS

The universal appeal of music has been taken advantage of by the National War Front in this district from the very beginning. Village teachers were exhorted in conferences and centre classes, as well as in

the visits to villages, to train up a set of young boys and girls for each school who could sing war songs in chorus in a melodious way. One of the objects of enlisting the co-operation of the teachers in Reading Circles is to secure a group of children to sing war songs at Reading Circle meetings. In most places, Reading Circle meetings are commenced after prayer and after singing of war songs. War ballad singing has become part of the curriculum in the schools of this district.

Two National War Front Songs were composed by the District Organizer, both of which were approved by the Ballad Sub-Committee for purposes of recording. It is hoped that early steps will be taken by the Provincial Organizer to have the songs recorded at an early date. It is a matter for pride to have to state that, in almost all the villages, where there are Reading Circles one would invariably find the school children singing the National War Front Songs of this district. This kind of propaganda has had a good deal of beneficial effect.

COMBATING CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE AND GOONDAISM

In August last when trouble was apprehended from the Congress elements, a special campaign was carried out in B. and E. taluks which are well-known for Congress predilections. It may be pointed out that the District Organizer, during the campaign, visited eight villages in a day holding eight meetings and delivering eight lectures. In spite of this campaign, if trouble did break out here and there, it was not on account of lack of propaganda, but for other reasons, such as lack of proper enforcement of law and order. Under these conditions, much of the likely trouble was prevented and discouraged by timely propaganda. B. taluk in particular, which had many persons notorious for their Congress sympathies and which was the centre of disturbances in August last is now a tame place, because of the slow and sure efforts of the National War Front, as was openly acknowledged by the Subdivisional Magistrate of B. in a public speech made by him on the occasion of the Variety Entertainment in aid of the Amenities for Troops Fund. This is so in the case of other taluks as well. The National War Front held meetings of Congress sympathisers and convinced them of the need for helping in the preservation of democracy in this world, when all their political aspirations were bound up with democracy.

The main outstanding achievement of the National War Front, as a result of the efforts during the period under review, is the strengthening of the morale of the people and the enlisting of their whole-hearted sympathy and support for the war effort. The people of the district have realized the importance of "Stay-put" and are working and saving for Victory which would crush, beyond redemption and recovery, the Axis 'Rakshasas.'

FOR THE VALIANT

Write the names in rolls of honour,
write them large in golden letters,
blazon them on waving banners,
names of battle proud and bitter.
Set beside the doughty Spartan
soldiers of the Dunkirk beaches ;
set beside the bold Horatius
heroes of the Volga bridges.
In the desert and the sand-dune,
in the snow and northern winter
these would not their post abandon,
played with Death the peerless hunter.

Dauntless in defeat and taking
from the dead a dear remembrance,
whether at the walls of Peking
Mongol masses threaten entrance.
Or the Viking force prevailing
hunts to hiding Saxon Alfred,
from the fall they rise to fight on
but the warrior in the wolf-ring.
Names to lay and legend lending
Chiang-kai-shek in Szechwan leaguered
Devereux on Wake short-handed
join the Herewardian saga.

Sing the song of mighty Roland,
Sing too Bataan bombed and battered,
where among the fox-holes fallen
fever-rid survivors battled.
Tell the tale of Tours and Martel,
be of Moscow too your ballad ;
Moor and Hun both met immortal
valour holding Death's own valley.
When the brave together gather
past the gates of life and laughter
ancient heroes in the aether
hail their kin who died no softer.

Indian Rama right maintaining
welcomes to a warrior's heaven
men that up the mountain winning
swept the razor-ridge of Keren.
Rooke who took the Rock so stoutly
Tobruk's garrison regarding
smiles applause, a spectre courtly ;
In the grave praise be their guerdon.
Kutusov in ghostly grimness
by the Beresina brooding
catches breath to see the bridgeheads
On the Don and Dnieper broaden.

For the liberties their fathers
fought to win and leave their children.
for the freedom too of others
by defeat and death bewildered.
See the airmen mount from England
to give battle in the Welkin ;
see in Maltese isle new-mingled
Martial ire and pride awaken.
When they chant Chitor's defenders
or intone the tale of Carthage
let the counterpoint too thunder
newer echoes of old courage.

R.G.

War and Politics

By DR. SIR C. R. REDDY, *Kt., Regional Leader of National War Front for Andhra Desa*

IT is the misfortune of India that its two leading political organizations, Congress and League, mixed up obligations towards the War Effort of the Allies with political demands. Not that there is anything morally wrong in trying to make political hay while the War sun shone. Politics is business and one too in which power plays the determining part. The misfortune lay in their putting forth demands without first securing conditions of convincing appeal or successful pressure. The Congress and League were fatally divided over the basic principles of our political reconstruction, and they continue to be divided. Latterly Mr. Rajagopalachariar somehow convinced himself and tried to convince the country that the differences between the League and the entire Nationalist India, including Congress, were though wide, yet bridgeable and that if trusted with a free hand, he could play the part of the architect of our political unity. I wonder if he still holds that view after Mr. Jinnah's speech at the recent meeting of the League. It is to me surprising that so prolific a broadcaster of statements has been silent so long over the League's most recent performance.

It is very natural for a subject people to be obsessed with the desire for political emancipation, with which undoubtedly are bound up both cultural and economic progress. But desire without capacity and more especially under such proved incapacity as has been made so painfully evident of late, is a pathological condition which can hardly evoke sympathy.

COMMUNAL REPRESENTATION

The discussions relating to the recent reconstruction of the Ministerial administration in Bengal—it cannot be called a Cabinet—is proof that while our ideas and talk relate to nationalism, our feelings and will are still in the region of tribe, creed and community. In Bengal, as in every other province, and as with reference to the Central Government, the heart's desire is for a balanced communal representation. They want to know how many Muslims would be there, how many caste Hindus, how many Scheduled Castes, and so forth. So also in the Punjab, in Sind and in Assam. This is also the case with the Central Government. Not a word about political divisions into Nationalists, Social Radicals, Socialists or other varieties. Nor about economic divisions like the Tenants' Parties, Parties of the Landlords, the varying aspects of Commercial and Industrial interests, or that latest word in social-economic reform, Communism. But ever and always about Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Scheduled Castes, Christians, Anglo-Indians; and aye, the subdivisions thereof, Brahmans and Non-Brahmans, Sunnis and Shias, and all the species of our ethnology. The present deplorable condition of our politics makes one doubt whether there is a political India in actual existence and whether, while our thoughts are on nationalism, our life is not tribal and continues to be tribal. I sometimes feel that the real political problems of India is how to evolve nationalism out of our tribalism.

It seems to me that even the Muslims have caught the contagion of divisions alike to Hindu tribalism by their long sojourn in our midst. That Sunnis differ widely from the Shias is a historical fact, the potency of which is not going to be reduced by political compromises. But in addition there are the Momins and the Ahrars, both powerful bodies which dispute the League's claim to be the sovereign of Muslim Indians. Even if all Muslims unite as against the Hindus, or rather non-Muslims generally, there is no knowing whether they would remain united when once the fight is over.

UNPLEASANT FACTS

My conclusion is that for the moment nationalistic politics in India appear to be not merely an impossibility but an absurdity. It is very sad that it should be so. But nothing is gained by closing our eyes to facts just because they are unpleasant.

I would, therefore, relegate politics to the background and accept the baleful shadow it casts as a fatality from which there is no present escape.

Moreover it seems to me that both now and after the War, problems of Indians abroad, and the economic condition of Indians here within the country, are of greater and more urgent importance than the division of the country into Sthans and the creation of a New Constitution. All the Castes and Communities in India are united in their views regarding the rights to be secured for Indians in South Africa, in Ceylon and other parts of the British Empire. The Muslim League, though it professes to represent a separate nation, resolved to plead, in generous self-contradiction, for all the Indians in South Africa instead of only for the Muslim emigrants. It has not extended its principle of separate nationality beyond the frontiers of India, at any rate, for the time being. It has also resolved on the question of the widely prevalent economic distress amongst the masses in the country on lines applicable for all Indians. From these two instances I infer

that on questions of economic import, now and after the war, all the parties in India are likely to act together as a united nation. So far as the professions of the Government go, they too appear to be very sympathetic and anxious to aid our efforts at securing conditions of permanent and progressive economic betterment. The post-war economic problems are likely to be of far greater and more insistent and urgent significance for the weal or woe of the people than political issues.

POST-WAR PROBLEMS

Government is training, spending money like water while in our dry districts water must be secured like money, war technicians by the hundreds and thousands. What is to happen to these after the war? A large number of industries have been started by the direct stimulation of war needs as well as by the protection offered by the cessation of imports. Our system of currency and exchange has been subjected to severe criticism. After war there is bound to be conflict of interests between countries like England, which may want to increase their exports enormously in order to make up for their war losses, and countries like India which would like to continue under a regime of minimum imports and maximum manufactures and exports. The Indian Government has a record of reckless initiative in India when it not only does not compete with British interests but is necessary for the welfare of Great Britain and her Empire. But whether under altered circumstances, it will not take the initiative in the opposite direction is a point on which past history cannot pass a favourable judgment. And if all this industrial and economic development is obliged to undergo slow decay or rapid extinction in order to make room for British or American interests, the hopes now raised will perish.

DEMOBILIZATION

There is the problem of the demobilized sepoys. A very large number of young men belonging to the depressed or untouchable classes have joined the Army. Already the social and economic consequences of this are affecting rural life and economy. The higher castes have not joined relatively in such large numbers as the untouchables of our cheries. If the privates come from one community which has been regarded as lower, in fact so low as to be untouchable, while a sufficiency of numbers, whether as privates or as officers, is not forthcoming from the communities which have traditionally enjoyed an artificial and arrogant superiority, one can easily imagine the chances of upheaval and conflict. In the cheries with which I am acquainted, the young lads at the front are sending every month some Rs. 15 or so to their parents at home—to them a fortune, a gold mine almost. These down-trodden people who were supplying cheap labour to the farmer communities now refuse to work for the old wages and more especially under the old treatment. Moreover,

Dr. Sir C. R. Reddy

a good number of these Panchamas have now become capitalists. The caste men have begun to wait at their doors for loans. The old, iniquitous economic, equilibrium, has been shattered. When, therefore, the demobilized Panchama sepoys return to their homes, will they put up with their semi-slave and degraded condition or will there be a new stir with widespread disturbances? The Social Orders as well as the economic has been rocked to their foundations as by an earthquake and may soon lie shattered in the dust. When that stage is reached—I say " when " because I have not the least doubt in the matter and will not therefore employ " if "—where will your politics be?

THE DELUGE OF PEACE

After War the Deluge of Peace will sweep the world. In India the deluge of social and economic cloud-bursts; in Europe, the defeated countries going Bolshevik and a further period of upheavals for different objectives and with different alliances and alignments of powers. The force of the world will not be what it was before the war; and none can prophecy its new aspect.

Thus I view the future as exposed to new tempests that may arise from new directions. So let us concentrate on healing the distress actually caused by the war and go slow in the matter of political constructions and reconstructions. In any event the victory of the Allies is the first condition of the very possibility of orderly progress, social, political and economic. Let us unitedly first strive to secure it.

Rural Economy and Village Safety

(*By* SIR P. T. RAJAN, *Kt., Regional Leader, National War Front., Tamil Nadu*)

THE National War Front movement was inaugurated in this Presidency by His Excellency the Governor a year ago. When the different political parties failed to come together in spite of the threat to this country from Axis powers, this movement supplied a common platform to men of all castes, creeds and political persuations to strengthen the war efforts of India. Fortunately for this Presidency a load was given by His Excellency the Governor in this matter very much earlier. This work was taken up by the National War Front movement and due to the large staff employed by Government its activities have been growing more and more day by day. This movement paid more attention to the work of the home front. False rumours were checked; fifth column activities were countered; people were persuaded to join the different branches of the fighting forces in large numbers; they were asked to grow more food; and the morale of the people was kept high.

SIR P. T. RAJAN

FOOD PROBLEM

As a result of the entry of Japan into the war and her temporary success in the East, the import of foodstuffs from Burma and other eastern countries was stopped. India soon found herself deficient in the matter of foodstuffs. This along with the greed of merchants who boarded up necessities of life with a view to make unconscionable profits, increased the cost of living. The middle and poor classes suffered much. In order to overcome this difficulty the "Grow More Food" campaign was taken up as an universal cry throughout the length and breadth of this country. Combined efforts of the National War Front and every department of Government, who had already been in the field, helped to make up the deficiency to some extent as neither the people nor the Government could solve the problem without the help of the other. If cities and large towns fared badly, villages in the interior fared worse. Want of transport facilities added to the difficulties of the problem. There were lootings here and there. The vigilance of the local authorities and the firm action taken by the Government prevented this evil from growing further. Prices of essential commodities were fixed and supply of foodstuffs from the surplus to deficit districts helped to ease the situation though it has not completely solved the problem. Villagers were asked to produce sufficient foodstuffs and vegetables to meet their requirements in the first instance and help their neighbours when left with a surplus. In the case of such commodities as kerosene and sugar they were asked to help in making an equitable distribution and seeing that no one appropriated more at the expense of others. Thus every villager was asked to realize his individual and collective responsibility which meant in a way the restoration of the old panchayat system wherein the representatives of different communities met together and disposed of matters affecting the welfare of the village community. This is in violent contrast to the present day village panchayats to which members are elected by votes leaving partisan spirit and bitterness in their wake.

VILLAGE SECURITY

As regards the safety of the villages the villagers were told that they cannot depend upon the normal police patrols who must necessarily be limited in number, for their safety and well-being in times of war. They should organize themselves in such a way as to enable them to put down looting and prevent attacks from outsiders who might have an eye on the produce of the village. They were also advised to be prepared to meet any

emergency such as landing of enemy troops in small numbers or of the activities of enemy agents in their midst.

I have referred very briefly to some of the activities which might be taken up by the villagers with great advantage to themselves and the country. India is a vast country and the villages are the units thereof. In an essentially agricultural country the villages can play a great part in the self-sufficiency of the country in so far as food-supplies are concerned. Greater attention has to be paid to village roads and communications without which foodstuffs cannot be conveyed easily from one part of the province to another. They can contribute to the war efforts by sending more men for enlistment in the different branches of the war machinery while supplying enough foodstuffs to those who are engaged in war work and others without having to depend upon other countries for necessities of life.

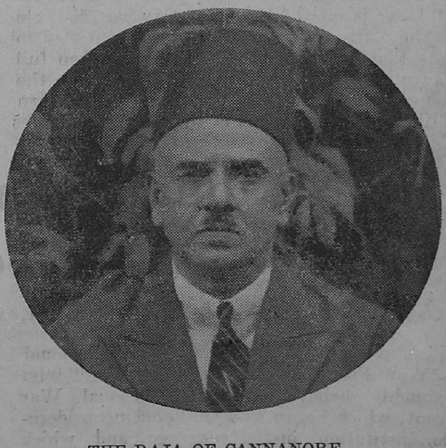
AFTER THE WAR IS OVER

When the fighting men return to their villages after the war is over they will introduce great changes, consciously or otherwise in the economic and social life of the countryside. Their standards of living will have undergone a change decidedly for the better and they will not care to revert to the dull existence of life, with low wages for their work, to which they have been accustomed before the war. Their narrow and parochial view of men and matters will have disappeared yielding place to a broad outlook on life based on experience gained in different parts of the world. They will have learnt many things in the different theatres of war which cannot be possibly learnt in elementary or higher schools at home. They will hereafter take a keen and intelligent interest not only in Indian affairs but also in matters and changes that will take place all over the world. There is every possibility of their thinking and acting for themselves instead of taking things for granted at the bidding of others. Common dangers to which these men will have been exposed every hour of their life in the battlefields and deeds of heroism in the face of great odds will have created a sense of fellow feeling and brotherhood amongst men of different castes and creeds. This will naturally have its repercussions on the time-honoured caste divisions and religious and social differences. It will further pave the way for unity in the country very much quicker than the present state of affairs will warrant. These are some of the changes that I anticipate in the rural life of this country as a result of the war. In fact they, who have won laurels and honours in all theatres of war will come back with a new faith and hope and with a vision of a better social and economic order of things in the future. If Axis powers were to win, all their great sacrifices would have been in vain. Their hopes will be shattered and their vision of a new era will disappear for a long time to come. If on the other hand the Allies were their own labour to the full.
have laid the foundation of a new India, whatever might be the differences between India and England at the present moment, with immediate prospects for a new order of things which will assure the people of this land full freedom to shape their life in a manner that will suit their genius and fulfil their hopes and aspirations. The younger of them might even live to enjoy the fruits of their ow n labour to the full.

Present War and Moplah Youth

By SULTAN ABDURAHIMAN ALI RAJAH, *Rajah of Cannanore, Regional Leader, N.W.F. Kerala*

A war of aggrandisement by the Axis Powers; a war between Have-Nots and Haves; a war between two ideologies; a war to establish a new order on earth; a war to establish peace for three hundred years; a war between the forces of evil and righteousness; a war to establish the four freedoms—freedom of speech, freedom of religion, freedom from want and freedom from fear—thus has this war, this greatest Armageddon of the world been described by world statesman. However described, one thing is certain; this world is not going to be left in the state in which it was before the fateful September 1939. The lives of every one will be affected for better or worse and the changes that are likely to come, after the clash is over, can scarcely be pictured —and I wonder whether any one has really cared to picture it.



THE RAJA OF CANNANORE

Except for the loss of Burma and its consequent evacuee problem and the problem of rice supply, we in India have been scarcely

affected. "We have been living a life of comparative safety and security, and the carnage that is taking place on the battle-fields and in occupied-Poland and Russia, the atrocities that are being perpetrated by the Gestapo under the new order of Hitler, can scarcely be imagined. We have been mercifully spared the sight and sufferings that the flower of humankind elsewhere has been enduring. Our problems are narrowed down to the proper distribution of food and control of prices." Of late, we in Malabar have been particularly affected by the rise in price of food grains and also by shortage of supply. Beyond these we know not the sufferings of war, though, historically, the Moplah community has never been so affected in its fortunes since the Mysore wars.

Thousands of Moplah families who lived in Penang, Singapore, Burma, Malaya and other places in the East Indies have been deprived of their means of livelihood, and I am witnessing the unpleasant sight of thousands of Moplahs relying on the dole provided by a merciful and benevolent Government. The sight of these evacuees is most pitiable, but what is more depressing is that among the thousands of these evacuees there is not the right spirit of adventure that ought to animate them in a crisis of this kind. It seems to me that the Moplah youth, including young men among evacuees, are throwing away a golden opportunity of service to the country, to the community, and to their families.

If this war has brought its full portion of tears, blood and toil elsewhere, to Indians it has been a golden opportunity to step up progress, militarily, financially and industrially, by at least fifty years, and he who does not seize this opportunity to better the status of India, is perverse indeed. Our young men can join, in their thousands, the Army, the Navy and the Air Force and build up a strong India which must be the pride of Nations. Malabar is one of the most forward districts in the matter of recruitment, and I am glad to note that my Hindu brethren have taken full advantage of the opportunities to enrol in the Army, learn arts and crafts and also learn Military Science. One of the standing charges by politicians against Britain was that she did not trust Indians sufficiently and therefore she did not train enough number of Indians as Officers. Since the war started, thousands of Indian Officers have been recruited and there is no branch of the Fighting Forces which is barred to the Indian. This being the state of affairs, we should grasp this opportunity and equip ourselves in all possible ways by enrolling in three services and in all technical branches.

In Malabar, Moplahs are said to be almost as numerous as the Hindus, but if the Recruiting figures are examined, it will be seen that the Moplahs are far below the Hindus. This apathy on the part of the Moplah youth is regrettable, and in years to come, the community as a whole will suffer by comparison with their Hindu brethren. It cannot be that the Moplah youth is not of the same bold stuff as the Hindus. The Moplahs are adventurous by nature, and I fail to understand the lack of enthusiasm on the part of our young men. A charge has been levelled against the Moplahs that they are not amenable to a life of discipline and sometimes the history of the Moplah Regiment of old is pointed out. If there is any truth in the allegation of want of discipline it is high time that we demonstrate our capacity for a life of discipline, for without discipline no community can thrive hereafter politically or industrially. Training in the use of arms, and training as technicians will be an asset ardently prized by any community and let not the youth of the Moplah community throw away opportunities given to them by this war. Let my co-religionists, all who are young and able to bear arms and learn a craft or trade come forward and let the evacuee young men also make an effort to get out of the dole mentality and flock to the Recruiting Officers in their thousands and earn an honest livelihood and serve their community and religion. This then is my advice to the thousands of Moplah youths in Malabar. Join the colours in their thousands. Let not your Hindu brethren cast a slur on your lack of adventure. Swell the ranks of the three fighting services in a spirit of healthy rivalry with your Hindu brethren. Join in your thousands and bring victory to the glorious United Nations.

National War Front and Scheduled Classes

By DIWAN BAHADUR M. C. RAJAH, M.L.A., *Regional Leader, Scheduled Classes.*

I am a fierce protaganist of the National War Front. I am one of those who staunchly believe that the National War Front, which began as a tiny and inconsiderable institution just a year ago, and which grew from strength to strength, undeterred and unhindered, is not the result and product of some fanciful and capricious visionaries, but that it is a potent and powerful movement, which is devised and designed to bring freedom for India. For, National War Front is, in truth, the combination and confederation

Diwan Bahadur M. C. RAJAH

of all freedom-loving citizens of India, who love their country. It is, as everyone is undoubtedly aware, not a conclave or preserve of any particular party, class or community. It has an appeal to and attraction for every man, woman and child, who inhabit India. National War Front seeks to uplift and ameliorate the condition of the people of India, politically, socially and economically. Its aim and object is to make the people of India live better and happier. The National War Front, which so subserves the interests of people of the country, is rightly known in some quarters as "National Welfare Front."

As correctly pointed out by His Excellency the Governor of Bengal, one of the objects of the National War Front is "to inform each individual according to his place in the community, of the part he can play towards the achievement of victory." The Scheduled Classes play no mean or unworthy part in achieving the goal in view. Let me hasten to say that the close association of these classes with the movement is, in a large measure, due to the unremittent endeavours of Capt. G. T. B. Harvey, Director of War Publicity, Madras.

APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL LECTURERS

The National War Front, Madras, employed *inter alia* a large "speech-making machinery," gradually extending its scope and continually widening its approach to the people of the Depressed Classes as well. These Scheduled Classes "are less amenable to the influence of caste propagandists". These communities therefore needed special attention. In fulfilment of this object, the Government, at the instance of the Director of War Publicity, sanctioned eleven Scheduled Class lecturers for carrying on propaganda among them.

Illiteracy reigns supreme among these classes. By distributing graphic posters and illuminating pictures, I understand from these additional lecturers of the National War Front, who work under my direct control and in close collaboration with the District Officials, that these classes have been awakened to a sense of responsibility at this perilous time for India, and contributed man power to serve in all ranks of the Army. In pursuance of the scheme of Government to recruit war technicians, sepoys, sappers, miners, etc., people may lecture from public platforms and leaders may give instructive and inspired talks. But when people are called on to fight in the fronts, some may sometimes betray a spirit of fright and force themselves off the forum. But the members of our community set a remarkable example. Emboldened as they usually are, they taught others courage. They enrolled themselves in large numbers as recruits and marched off to battlefields in glee and with pleasure, to the surprise of brothers of other communities, and to the satisfaction of the powers-that-be. Statistics prove that 40 per cent of the recruits hail from the Scheduled Classes. This fact lays bare that these classes are devoted subjects, whose love for their King is unbounded and whose spirit of sacrifice in the cause of the country is unparalleled. These marvellous results can, to a large extent, be ascribed to the systematic and well-regulated measures taken by the National War Front through its propaganda agency.

GIVING THEM THE TOOLS

Men of the Scheduled Classes have been, in another direction, rendering invaluable service to the country, here again, as a result of the efforts of the propaganda staff of the National War Front. The modern warfare needs material more than the men. "Give us the tools and we shall finish the job"—says the Prime Minister. The factories in India engaged in the production of equipment are busy day in and day out. The workers in these centres, who are largely drawn from the Scheduled Classes, are turning out the "tools" with the sweat of their brows.

Propaganda work is carried on by the teachers belonging to Scheduled Classes employed in schools at the direction of the National War Front. They are not only doing propaganda in the school zones but are extending their activities to the adjacent villages by visiting them in batches in nights giving periodical talks to the village folk. The results are said to be exhilarating, as their efforts are sincere.

INFLUENCE OF MUSIC

Music has proved to be a powerful weapon of appeal in rural areas. Young boys and girls

drawn from the Scheduled Classes are particularly adaptable to chorus 'tunes' and 'songs.' In Y.M.C.A. centres and such similar institutions in rural areas, a good deal of propaganda is done by these children through 'songs' and 'music.' Even the little adolescents of the community have been harnessed for service under the National War Front.

When the Village Security Scheme was inaugurated in some districts of the Madras Presidency, there was said to be slow response from the public to take up the posts of Village Guards, as some of the caste villagers viewed the organization with suspicion. The members of the Scheduled Classes rose to the occasion and readily enlisted themselves as Village Guards, with their characteristic courage of their convictions. They gave the lead and others followed them.

The enrolment of this community as vigilants to preserve the security and the integrity of the village improved also incidentally the social side of these men. Under the scheme, there are common dinners at the expense of the state in which all Village Guards partake at the conclusion of physical exercises. These common dinners have been fostering a spirit of tolerance in inter-communal gatherings, particularly, in villages where orthodoxy took deep roots. I do not hesitate to assert that the Village Security Scheme, which is working under the auspices of the National War Front, has been, in a limited way, shaping the social regeneration of the country, advocating by example, elimination of caste rigidity which has thwarted the efforts to make India socially an integral whole.

PROPAGANDA DRIVES

Thanks to the untiring efforts of the War Publicity Department, great drive and momentum have been given to the "Grow More Food" Campaign, the "Contact" movement, "Security Scheme," the opening of National War Front Fuel Depots," the production of "National War Front Rama Deepa lamps" and other activities, which are too innumerable to catalogue. The members of the Scheduled Classes have received their share of the benefits of such schemes.

During the course of my tours I am convinced that constant and incessant propaganda is made among all classes and communities. National War Front is recognised as a living force in villages and towns. If Government were to strengthen the staff of propagandists in all taluks, the object, I think, will be achieved quicker.

TRIBUTE TO LEADER OF NATIONAL WAR FRONT

The National War Front in this Province has had one year's record of successful work. It is gratifying that it is, by common consent, far ahead of the other provinces. Ardently do I hope that it will, in time to come, continue to do useful service to the country, with unabated vigour and undiminished zeal, under the able leadership of His Excellency Sir Arthur Hope.

Food-Production, Transport and Distribution

By RAJAH SIR SWETACHELAPATHI RAMAKRISHNA RANGA RAO BAHADUR VARU, *The Rajah of Bobbili, K.C.I.E., Member, National Defence Council*

IN these days of total war the Home Front is as important as the fighting line. For maintaining the flow of military supplies to our fighting forces and for sustaining the morale of the Nation, it is the primary duty of the State to provide commodities essential for maintaining the life of the community, at reasonable prices.

Unfortunately in the absence of reliable statistics it is impossible to accurately estimate the average pre-war production and consumption of staple food grains in India. We have figures for imports and exports of rice and wheat which do not help us very much in estimating the present deficit. In the provinces no planning has been undertaken in the past for increasing the production of food to keep pace with the rapidly rising population. As far as Madras is concerned, the present population in round figures is 50,000,000 (50 millions) which represents an increase of nearly 15 per cent during the last decade. During this period no major irrigation work has been undertaken in this presidency. Taking into consideration the fact that we have to send supplies to Ceylon, and the States of Travancore and Cochin the deficit in rice may be approximately taken to be 20 per cent or 1,000,000 tons. I say this subject to correction.

THE RAJAH OF BOBBILI

GROW MORE FOOD CAMPAIGN

The results achieved as measured in increased acreage 743,000 under food crops is certainly gratifying. The estimated yield is 507,000 tons of which only a small proportion is rice. I must confess to a feeling that this vital problem is being tackled more as a war-time measure without any long-range policy. Burma will no doubt be reconquered but the relations between the two countries cannot be expected to be again the same, bad as they were before. No doubt, Burma owes a great deal for her development and prosperity to her historical and administrative association with this country. But in these days of national self-sufficiency although we shall continue to put up a fight for special privileges for Indians in Burma, we must be prepared for the day when we can no longer count on drawing supplies of paddy at low prices to meet our deficits. When we legitimately claim the right of self-determination for India we cannot deny the same privilege to sister nations.

Quite apart from the above reasons in the national interests I would strongly urge upon the Government and the public the necessity of making our province entirely self-supporting in the matter of foodstuffs. The population has greatly outstripped the capacity of the cultivable land to support it. Economic questions will assume serious dimensions unless the great problem is tackled at once and agricultural land provided for the land cess. This can only be done by immediately taking up great irrigation projects in the deficit areas. The local Government have with commendable promptitude granted many concessions to induce the ryots to grow more, but in the nature of things these steps already taken can only touch the fringe of the problem. Rice is our staple food crop and it can be grown only by providing irrigation and it is a well-known fact that there is hardly any scope for expansion under the existing irrigation systems.

PROBLEM OF TRANSPORT

It is not enough to grow more food. It must be made available in the deficit areas. Here we come up against the problem of transport. Railways are already strained almost to the breaking point. Motor transport facilities are rapidly diminishing owing to non-availability of petrol, tyres and spares. Bullock carts cannot be employed for long-distance traffic. Enough power alcohol can be manufactured by the sugar factories in India from waste products, to keep all the private lorries going. But Government are either unwilling or unable to arrange for the machinery being imported from America or manufactured in this country.

As the present transport position is likely to deteriorate in future it is of the utmost importance that the authorities should concentrate their attention on growing more foodstuffs in the deficit area. If this is successfully done it would to a material extent relieve the strain on our railways.

Our main deficit areas in the order of importance are : (in tons) Malabar (247,048), Madras City (109,220), Salem (92,757), Coimbatore (88,317) and Vizagapatam (65,965). Then there are other areas with small deficits, such as the Ceded Districts, Ramnad, Madura, Tinnevelly and the Nilgiris. Until the Government of India Act of 1935 came into force no productive irrigation scheme could be sanctioned unless it is guaranteed to pay 6 per cent at the end of the tenth year calculated from the beginning. In other countries the increased prosperity of the people, additions to income-tax, railway revenue and other indirect benefits are taken into consideration. But in this country the direct return by way of land revenue is the only consideration. If this was the test the Great Shannon Irrigation and Hydro-Electric Scheme would not have become an established fact in Eire. Several Hydro-Electric schemes have been held up for the same reason in the Northern Circars. How can the demand pre-exist before the power is available? Owing to the absence of scientific planning the development of our water resources has been ill-balanced. Take for example the case of the Tanjore district. A compact area must be able to produce both dry and wet crops and some grazing land has to be reserved. Instead of this practically the whole of the cultivable land in Tanjore district has been converted into wet as a result of the Mettur Project. As a consequence during the economic

depression from 1930 to 1937 the agriculturists suffered more in this district. Now again when the normal transport facilities are not available the paddy prices in this area are lower than in any other district in the province. The grievances of the Tanjoreans have been aired in the press and outside.

The Government in my opinion should not lose any time in starting major irrigation projects in the deficit areas. There are so many schemes for these parts already investigated that there is no need for any further exploratory work. If the Government feel that their energies cannot and should not be diverted from more important work connected with the war, and if they are not prepared to raise the necessary finance for fear it may affect the offtake of Defence Loans, then I suggest that these works may be entrusted to non-official agencies. On the basis of, say, a thirty years' lease funds can be raised by joint-stock companies to finance these schemes. This would also check the present inflatory tendency in the country. I anticipate opposition to these proposals from certain quarters that no major irrigation project can be undertaken without diverting our limited supplies of steel and cement from more important war requirements. The great Godavari and Kistna irrigation schemes were constructed when the use of cement and steel was practically unknown in this country, while as a matter of fact it remains to be seen whether reinforced concrete construction is really suitable for a tropical country like India.

EXTENSION OF IRRIGATION WORKS

Beginning from the north, I suggest the construction of a reservoir on the upper reaches of the Nagavali river as well as the Dusi project for utilizing the surplus waters of the same river now running to waste into the sea. These two schemes which were about to be sanctioned some years back would, to a great extent, wipe out the deficit in the production of rice in Vizagapatam district. Madras City can as at present be supplied from the surplus areas of East and West Godavari, Kistna and Nellore. The deficit in Salem can be met from Tanjore and by supplying Mettur water to some of the taluks on the left bank of the Cauvery river. The immediate construction of the Bhavani project would convert the Coimbatore district into a surplus area flowing with milk and honey. Sufficient supplies of rice will be available to meet the needs of Malabar which is at present the largest deficit (247,048 tons) area and the Nilgiris.

In the south the districts of Madura and Ramnad can be made self-supporting by extending the existing irrigation under the Periyar lake. If a fixed proportion of the increased yield is earmarked for Travancore, the negotiations with this state would be greatly facilitated. The Papanasam Hydro-Electric Scheme can irrigate many thousands of acres of land in Tinnevelly district.

Lastly—but not least in importance—I will deal with the Ceded Districts. It does not reflect much credit on the previous administration that after eighty or more years of management, these districts are still subject to the ravages of acute famine. Prevention is better than cure. If the money spent on famine works during these years has been diverted to protective works the lot of the people of Rayalaseema would have been a happy one. It is more than a generation since the people of Andhra Desa have been looking with eager hopes for the fruition of the great Tungabhadra Project. I trust and pray that this would not after all prove to be an empty dream. In the beginning of this century this project was said to have been designed to provide irrigation for Nellore, Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary, Anantapur and Chittoor districts. At every fresh investigation the area to be benefited has been contracted. Now reports are current that Bellary and one taluk of Anantapur alone would be benefited. If this is true then this project as finally shaped would be more in the interests of Hyderabad than Madras. I hope my information is not correct. Before our Government affix their signature to the agreement with the Hyderabad State it would be desirable in the public interest to publish the main conditions for public information so as to avoid future disappointment.

MINOR PROJECTS

Hundreds of minor projects had been investigated in the Ceded Districts but have been put on the shelf on the expectation that the Tungabhadra Project would cover these areas. These works may be taken up at once. The remodelling and improvement of the Cuddapah-Kurnool canal would easily double the production of rice in these two districts. In these areas Government should not expect to make a profit on the outlay. In fact if these works are completed there would be hardly any need for famine works in future. About the year 1936 I drew up a scheme for an electric grid for these famine-stricken areas to supply power for well-irrigation and minor industries. There was also provision for afforestation and a cotton mill in this large cotton producing area. But I regret to say that succeeding governments have only tinkered with this problem so far. Of course it is not possible to do anything in this direction for the duration of the war.

There are many other ways by which the productive capacity of the province can be materially increased. At my instance the Madras Impartible Estates Act was suitably amended to enable portions of impartible estates with equal income and advantages to be exchanged for similar areas. At present the villages belonging to the majority of the permanently settled estates are intermingled. This has resulted in not only ruinous litigation as regards water rights and boundaries, but has prevented the construction of important

irrigation works. By consolidating the estates the efficiency of the administration can be improved and the cost lowered, litigation avoided and best and more economical use of our natural water resources made. I respectfully suggest to Government to straightaway appoint a small committee to tackle this subject. A beginning can be made with the estates now under the management of the Court of Wards.

Secondly, many new important productive irrigation schemes can be taken up in predominantly ryotwari taluks if Government are prepared to acquire private upper riparian rights along with the lands. The extra cost of the administration will be practically very little and the productive capacity of the areas in question can be materially increased to the lasting benefit of the country.

PRICES (CONTROL)

When I agreed to write this article for the "Madras War Review" I intended to confine myself to the main subject, but now that I consider the question of prices of foodstuffs has assumed such great importance that I feel I will be failing in my duty if I do not touch upon this aspect. Both the Central and the Local Governments are to be congratulated on the material results of the measures adopted by them for the proper distribution of foodstuffs. It is hoped that as more and more experience is gained the Governments will with the co-operation of the public be able to remove some of the existing defects and close the gaps. I am not for a moment suggesting that normal conditions are about to be restored. Two things have to be borne in mind. The existing food-supplies are not sufficient to meet 100 per cent of the needs of the people. There is acute shortage of railway wagons and this situation is likely to deteriorate as time goes on unless the Government of India succeed in importing railway rolling stock from abroad. We have to take note of the existing supplies and make the best and most equitable use of them. Some amount of inconvenience and hardship to the public cannot, I regret to say, be avoided for the duration of the war.

In the year 1940 when local officers attempted to prevent the rise of prices I was one of those who strongly opposed this move. It should not be forgotten that the agriculturists did not secure remunerative prices for their produce ever since the depression began in 1930. But now the prices have gone up over 200 per cent and the time has come when the Government should seriously consider the question of fixing primary prices. Even assuming the distribution and supply of foodstuffs to the deficient areas and urban centres would be improved and perfected, the question of prices can no longer be ignored. I am told Government are ready with a scheme for rationing of food stuffs. But may I ask what use are all these measures to the poor, the landless agricultural labourers and the middle classes with fixed incomes if they cannot afford to buy their necessaries of life. Government servants and industrial labour have been granted dearness allowance but this benefit has been wiped out by ever increasing prices. Although India still continues to be a predominantly agricultural country nearly 50 per cent of the people have to buy their food in the open market. It is not correct to say that even in the rural areas every family is in a position to grow sufficient food to meet the annual requirements.

The Government view appears to be that unless the prices of all the other requirements are also controlled it would be unfair to the agriculturists to fix the price of their produce. Now let us examine what those other necessaries of life are. They are salt, sugar, kerosene, firewood and cloth. The first four are already under control and what is the difficulty in fixing the price of cloth, why should the Government of India still permit export of cloth on private account? A population on semi-stravation diet is a danger to the State and the successful prosecution of the war and I earnestly appeal to the Government to give their immediate attention to this problem. All their super-human efforts to move foodstuffs to the deficit areas and to control the sales would be in vain if foodstuffs are not made available at prices within the reach of the general public. In England I am told the prices of foodstuffs and other necessaries of life have been kept at about 30 per cent above the pre-war level while in America they are still lower. Why cannot we adopt measures at least to prevent further rises?

This brings me to the vexed question of inflation. Economic experts whose opinions carry great weight have suggested various remedial measures. I as a layman do not propose to touch upon these highly technical matters.

But there are other remedies which strike me as worthy of a fair trial.

FAIR-PRICE DEPOTS

All industrial establishments which employed 50 or more hands should open fair-price depots selling cloth, rice, salt, sugar and kerosene. Government and private agencies might do likewise for their employees. This would obviate the necessity of giving dearness allowance and would automatically help to keep down prices. Wherever possible foodstuffs should be grown on home-farms for supplying these fair price depots. Governments in the provinces should start large manure works for supplying the agriculturists at economic prices. As we are not in a position to import rice from foreign countries, the use of Australian wheat to supplement the rice diet should be encouraged at least in the urban areas.

The present serious situation in the country as a result of uncontrolled inflation is no doubt engaging the serious attention of the Government of India, but the public are not taken into their confidence, at least as regards the broad principles.

The new rupee can no longer be called a silver rupee. The result has been that the general public have lost confidence, may be mistakenly, in our currency. That is the reason for the prices of gold, silver and precious stones soaring sky high. No doubt the present money market conditions help the Government of India in their defence loan operations, but at what cost? Government are paying two to three times the normal price for their purchases of war supplies. This is a heavy but avoidable drain on our war finance. When the prices of precious stones and metals are so much above the London and New York market quotations, Government should have immediately allowed imports on private account or themselves undertaken these operations. I understand the price of gold now is three times the London price. I think the time has come when Government should move to check this dangerous tendency.

If joint-stock companies are permitted to undertake construction of major irrigation works, it would provide an outlet for the surplus money in the country. Then again by a well thought-out scheme of land purchase in Bengal, Madras, Behar and United Provinces, many estates can be acquired on a voluntary basis and converted into ryotwari. By issuing tax-free agricultural 3 per cent bonds nearly 100 crores of our surplus monies can be easily absorbed. If these bonds are made non-negotiable they will not compete with war loans. This will be a self-supporting scheme.

In conclusion I wish to emphasize only one point, and that is, let the Government take the public into their confidence and prove to them that the best possible steps are being taken to meet the situation, and then I feel no doubt that the Indian people will patiently put up with many inconveniences and hardships for the duration.

THE DUTY OF EVERYONE

There is an immense amount of work everybody can do. We cannot all join the forces, but we can help by advising people to join the forces. We can help to get over the timidity of some of the elders who do not wish their children to join the forces by explaining to them that all young men who are healthy and who can possibly go should join the forces in greater and greater numbers because the War is by no means over. It may take a long time to be over and many more thousands of people will be wanted from this Province alone, let alone the rest of India.

Another thing we can do is to make people War-Conscious, to make them realise that these are not times of peace, and that there have got to be changes in the life of every individual. We must economise, live more simply, save as much as we can and put into the War Savings Certificates and the various War Loans. We have to forget the nice times of peace and remember only the horrible times of War. We must forget the past in every sense, forget it politically and socially, forget all the things we used to do, and concentrate on the present, keeping our eyes on the future. That is the duty of everyone.

—H. E. Sir Arthur Hope, Provincial Leader of the National War Front, in his speech on May 22, 1942, inaugurating the National War Front in Madras.

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